



Papa Panov's Special Christmas

In a distant, snowy Russian village, on Christmas Eve, an old shoemaker named Papa Panov sat in his rocking chair, reminiscing about past Christmases with his family. Now alone, his heart ached for those joyful times. Determined to shake off his sadness, he read the Christmas story from his family Bible, wishing he could have offered Mary and Joseph a warm place for baby Jesus.

Papa Panov had a dream that night. In his dream, Jesus promised to visit him on Christmas Day. Excited and hopeful, Papa Panov woke up early and prepared for his special guest. He invited a road sweeper in from the cold for a cup of warm coffee, sharing his dream and spreading a bit of Christmas cheer.

Throughout the day, Papa Panov eagerly watched for Jesus, helping everyone who passed by his shop. He fed a hungry young mother and her baby, even giving them a perfect pair of tiny leather shoes he had crafted, initially saved as a gift for Jesus.

As evening fell and the village quieted down, Papa Panov felt disappointed, believing he had missed his special visitor. But then, in the stillness of his shop, he realized something magical. The day's visitors reappeared in his mind, each whispering, "Didn't you see me, Papa Panov?"

It was then he heard the voice of Jesus, explaining that he had indeed visited Papa Panov that day, in the guise of the people he had helped and welcomed. Overwhelmed with joy and peace, Papa Panov understood that the true spirit of Christmas had been with him all along, in every act of kindness he had shown.

"So he did come after all!" Papa Panov exclaimed, his heart brimming with happiness, truly feeling the magic of Christmas.